

esprit orchestra off the ²⁰⁰⁷ edge ²⁰⁰⁸

alex pauk music director and conductor



25th anniversary season
Gala Concert
Friday, October 19, 2007

Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts

Esprit Orchestra Friday October 19th, 2007
Alex Pauk Music Director & Conductor

Flute

Douglas Stewart
Christine Little Ardagh
Maria Pelletier(Flute/Piccolo)
Shelley Brown

Oboe

Lesley Young
Hazel Nevin Newton
Karen Rotenberg(Oboe/English Horn)
Barbara Bolte (English Horn)

Clarinet

Max Christie
Dick Thomson (clarinet/bass clarinet)
Greg James (clarinet)

Bassoon

Jerry Robinson
Bill Cannaway (contra bassoon)
Steve Mosher (bassoon)
Larkin Hinder (bassoon)

Horn

Gary Pattison
Vince Barbee
Diane Doig
Linda Bronicheski
Michele Gagnon
Bardhyl Gjevori
James MacDonald
Christine Passmore

Trumpet

Stuart Laughton
Anita McAlister
Richard Sandals
Valerie Cowie

Trombone

Bob Ferguson
David Archer
Herb Poole (bass trombone)

Tuba

Scott Irvine
Mark Bonang

Harp

Sanya Eng

Piano

Lydia Wong

Celeste

David Swan

Percussion

Blair Mackay
Trevor Tureski
Ryan Scott
Mark Duggan
Graham Hargrove
Rick Sacks

Alto Saxophone

Rob Carli
Peter Lutek

Violin 1

Fujiko Imaishi (Concertmaster)
Corey Gemmell
Anne Armstrong
Sandy Baron
Jayne Maddison
Hiroko Kagawa

Violin 2

Bethany Bergman
Rebekah Wolkstein
Ron Mah
Michael Sproule
Louise Pauls
Nicole Zarry

Viola

Douglas Perry
Rhyll Peel
Kathy Rapoport
Eric Paetkau

Cello

Elaine Thompson
Marianne Pack
Olga Laktionova
Elspeth Poole

Bass

Tom Hazlitt
Hans Preuss
Calum MacLeod
Robert Wolanski



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orchestra

Alex Pauk, Music Director & Conductor

Friday October 19th, 2007

Jane Mallet Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts

8:00 p.m. CONCERT

7:15 p.m. pre-concert composers talk

Esprit Orchestra is deeply grateful to The Koerner Foundation for its sponsorship of tonight's concert.

Andrew Burashko - piano

Peter Longworth - piano

PROGRAMME

Sinfonia
(1974)

Tristan Keuris

The Canada Council for the Arts Molson Prize presented by Robert Sirman, Director of the Canada Council for the Arts.

Portals of Intent
(1993)

Alex Pauk

Intermission

Over Time
(1987)
(Toronto Premiere)

John Rea

Shattered Night, Shivering Stars
(1997)
(2000 JUNO Award Best Composition)

Alexina Louie

Intermission

Tabuh-Tabuhan
(1936)

Colin McPhee

Toccata for orchestra and two pianos



Tonight's concert is being recorded for future broadcast on CBC Radio 2. Enjoy the concert again on The Signal, heard evenings from 10pm - 1am, with hosts Laurie Brown & Pat Carrabre; & on Sunday Afternoon In Concert, heard each Sunday afternoon from 1 - 4pm, with host Bill Richardson. CBC Radio 2 is at 94.1 FM in Toronto.



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orchestra

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www.espritorchestra.com

Sunday, November 25, 2007

Concert sponsored by the Esprit Board of Directors and Joe Macerollo

Alex Pauk • CONDUCTOR

GUEST ARTISTS • Andrew Burashko / piano

Marie-Danielle Parent /soprano

Alfred Schnittke (Russia)

Concerto for Piano and String Orchestra

R. Murray Schafer (Canada)

Scorpius

originally commissioned and premiered by Esprit

Harry Freedman (Canada)

Town

originally commissioned and premiered by Esprit

Chris Paul Harman (Canada)

14 Chorale Melodies • World Premiere

Denis Gougeon (Canada)

Clere Vénus

2007 JUNO Award – Best Composition

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location & time for all esprit orchestra concerts:

8 pm concert / 7:15 pm pre-concert talk

Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E., Toronto, ON

BIOGRAPHIES

ALEX PAUK

COMPOSER, MUSIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR

Alex Pauk, composer, conductor, educator, entrepreneur, had much to do with revitalizing Canadian orchestral musical life for composers by founding Esprit Orchestra in 1983 as Canada's only orchestra devoted to new music. Esprit, with a core of 50 of Canada's best new music instrumentalists and an annual subscription series in Toronto, encourages composers from across Canada to take bold new directions. Through building and sustaining its high calibre performances, commissioning programme, innovative programming (80% Canadian), recordings, performing arts videos and DVDs, Toward a Living Art Education Programme, In Your Space outreach initiatives, tours and International relations, and interdisciplinary arts and media ventures, Pauk has made Esprit a major force for developing and promoting Canadian music at home and abroad. As a conductor he attains performances of the highest caliber on stage and in recordings. Every Esprit concert since the group's founding has been recorded for broadcast on CBC Radio. His innovative programming and commitment to the community through Esprit have garnered SOCAN and Chalmers Awards as well as three Lieutenant Governor's Awards. He was named Musician of the Year (1999) by peers at the Toronto Musicians' Association and he has helped many composers advance their careers through commissions, high profile performances, recordings and broadcasts. Pauk's recordings of music by Canadian composers Chris Paul Harman and Brian Current helped them win, respectively, prizes in the International Rostrum of Composers (Paris) and Barlow (USA) competitions. Pauk's commissioning, performance and promotion of Canadian music (composers of all ages and stylistic trends) is central to his work with Esprit. His six CBC Records compact discs of Canadian music are an important set in the overall catalogue of CDs in Canada and his work with performing arts filmmaker Larry Weinstein of Rhombus Media, with projects such as Ravel's Brain, have set new standards in the genre. Since 1985, Pauk's Toward a Living Art Programme with Esprit has provided approximately 1,500 students annually with a range of experiences; "sitting in" with Esprit musicians at rehearsals and performances, composing for Esprit, attending special student concerts and workshops, receiving free concert tickets and study guides. Pauk has been a leader in taking new music out of the concert hall and to people in their communities with performances in unusual locations such as the CN Tower and night clubs, and he has provided opportunities for choreographers and dancers, stage and lighting designers, actors and directors and media and visual artists to combine their talents with Esprit in adventurous cross-disciplinary projects. Pauk has lead Esprit on several Canadian tours (including Calgary Winter Olympics Arts Festival 1988, Western Canadian Tour 1998, and Montréal/Nouvelles Musiques Festival 2005) and in 1997 initiated an ongoing exchange and touring project with The Netherlands, a venture which included Esprit's debut European tour in 1999 and remains vital to this day. Under Pauk's direction Esprit was awarded the 2005 Vida Peene Fund for excellent standards of performance and innovative programming.

Alex Pauk has a very wide range of experience as a composer with works for every kind of performing ensemble (some including electroacoustic sound), the theatre as well as dance companies. Revealing this depth of experience, his most notable compositions of recent years include; Touch Piece, a multimedia work for full orchestra, 16 channel surround sound with electroacoustic sound, sounds of nature and altered orchestral sound projected from loudspeakers, multi-screen video environment (images of nature and the Cosmos) and fabric sculptures with special theatrical lighting; Farewell to Heaven, a full length work for the Menaka Thakkar Indian Dance Company (blending Southeast Asian musical elements with Western orchestral sounds); three works involving important Canadian virtuosos: Concerto for Harp and Orchestra (Erica Goodman harp), Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra (Duo Turgeon pianos) and Flute Quintet (Robert Aitken flute with Cuarteto Latinoamericano). Currently Pauk is composing a work for large ensemble commissioned by La Société de musique contemporaine du Québec.

Pauk graduated from the University of Toronto Faculty of Music in 1971, attended the Ontario Arts Council's Conductors Workshop, helped found the Arraymusic in Toronto, then moved to Japan for conducting studies at the Toho Gakuen School of Music. In 1973 he settled in Vancouver and established the new music group Days Months and Years to Come. After studies in Europe in 1978/79 he made Toronto his base, founded Esprit Orchestra, served as co-chair for the 1984 ISCM World Music Days and was Music Director and Conductor for the Satori New Music Festival (Winnipeg Symphony). He has conducted opera including R. Murray Schafer's Princess of the Stars performed on Wildcat Lake, Haliburton Forest and Wildlife Reserve and Timothy Sullivan's Dreamplay and Charles Wilson's The Summoning of Everyman for Opera in Concert. In 2004 he was guest conductor for the Ergo Ensemble on their tour to Lithuania. Pauk has composed more than sixty works and has both composed for and conducted CBC Vancouver Orchestra, New Music Concerts, Vancouver New Music, Québec Symphony, Hannaford Street Silver Band and the Toronto Symphony. Pauk won the Yorkton Film Festival Golden Sheaf Award for 2007 and is the 2007 recipient of the Molzon Prize for the Arts administered by The Canada Council for the Arts.

SINFONIA

(1974)

TRISTAN KEURIS

In 1976 TRISTAN KEURIS, at the time thirty years old, received the Matthijs Vermeulen Prize of the 1975 season for his *Sinfonia* for orchestra. Up to then a rather unknown young composer, Keuris was suddenly catapulted into public attention. The 'secret' of his music, that special quality that brought him so strongly to public attention in the middle of the Seventies, consists in among other things the clarity of his ideas, the lucid musical language he employed in giving form to various compositions, and by no means least of all, the brilliant orchestration and instrumentation of each individual work.

At least equally notable was Keuris' characteristic mixture in those years of romantic gesture (for instance the sudden orchestral eruptions and, even more so, the captivating close of *Sinfonia*), Stravinskian aloofness (taut chords and, despite all the fresh starts, a certain harmonic stillness) and a highly contemporary, exploded, even fragmented type of melody (at times Debussy briefly emerges: Keuris, too, suggests more melodically than what he actually bestows on the listener).

But what one hears most of all in Keuris' scores is that the composer breathes music, thinks music, 'is music'. Not standing aloof from his work like a quasi-intellectual busybody administering notes, Keuris draws from within himself in creating this world of sound. This aspect was for the first time optimally realized in the *Sinfonia*.

'I thought: now music has to become much more straightforward', Keuris related to Mienke Knipscheer shortly after the announcement of his receiving the Vermeulen Prize. 'All that explanation and claptrap in the programmes. It's simply music, it has no programme I don't believe in them. For a while I went along in a certain direction, although you could hardly say of my music that it took a leading position. But it turned out to be an unrewarding path. I was forced to change directions and wanted to return but I didn't really know how. I could say, I really miss and I do a bit all those major sevenths and minor ninths. Nostalgia for the romantic and classical periods, but that doesn't mean that I have to turn around and start composing in that style tomorrow. You have to find a simpler, more transparent system, but it must be new. The *Sinfonia* was my attempt at this.'

Tristan Keuris composed the *Sinfonia*, commissioned by the VPRO broadcasting company, between 1972 and 1974.



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PORTALS OF INTENT

(1993)

ALEX PAUK

Portals of Intent is in one movement but has sections as follows:

Shades of Realization

Silent Knowledge

The Dreamer

Assemblage Points of Luminosity

The Gait of Power

In reading the books of Carlos Castaneda over the years, I have developed an interest in exploring musical parallels to certain aspects of sorcery as investigated by the author through his mentor, a Yaqui Indian named Juan Matus. In particular, I've been intrigued by the sorcerer's notion of "intent" as a universal, immeasurable, indescribably force linked with everything that exists in the cosmos.

Sorcerers claim that through "unbending intent" (singlemindedness), one can turn music, objects, etc., into vehicles for new perceptions and meanings. "Intent" (a richer word for "will" or "spirit") is a focus on what is being intended.

Sorcerers say that heightened awareness is the portal of "intent". "Intent" is to be felt and used byut not explained. Furthermore, the natural knowledge of "intent" is available to anyone, but the command of it belongs to those who probe it.

Enough of trying to explain the inexplicable. Suffice it to say that music is often equally inexplicable and bears many relationships to "intent" in terms of dealing with perception, the modality of time, felling, awareness, universality and, last but not least, singlemindedness something that is needed to create or experience music profoundly.

It is these matters that I explore in *Portals of Intent*. The musical materials used are not meant to break new ground so much as to effect moods, changes of feeling and states of awareness. While complex sonorities sometimes result from the combination of simple elements (scales, arpeggios, chords), I've attempted to design the piece in broad gestures aiming at a certain simplicity in comprehension.

AP

OVER TIME (1987) for orchestra

(1987)

JOHN REA

This work concerns itself more with the progression of its instrumental colours over time than with the progression of its harmonies or the unfolding of its form. The changing and continuously moving colours in the composition behave in much the same way that “Klangfarbenmelodien” do: timbral structure in the music is elaborated to a greater degree than harmonic structure.

Many of my previous compositions in the years leading up to *Over Time*, *Hommage à Vasarely* (1977), *Treppenmusik* (1982) and *Vanishing Points* (1983) were inspired by various techniques employed in the art of painting, particularly optical art together with the special place it had reserved for the deployment of visual illusions. *Over Time* is also concerned with the visual arts but here it is the impact of a multicoloured light-kinetic, thus time-based, visual art that had inspired me.

Over Time was written on a commission from the Orchestre Métropolitain (Montreal) with additional support from the Canada Council. It received its premiere in 1987 under the direction of Walter Boudreau and appeared on a Centrediscs recording the following year.

JR

SHATTERED NIGHT, SHIVERING STARS

(1997)

ALEXINA LOUIE

This piece incorporates many of the elements that have evolved in my music over the years: outwardly, the inspiration of the heavens and the stars, which fill me with a sense of mystery, wonder and awe, and inwardly, the seeking of a personal truth through the expressive power of music. It is inspired by a line of poetry by Pablo Neruda, "The night is shattered and the blue stars shiver in the distance". The suggestiveness of the words "shivering" and "shattered" led me to explore instrumental effects which are intended to conjure up sensuous, haunting feelings in the listener. The poem itself reveals the devastation of the poet at the departure of his loved one. My composition may recreate in the listener feelings that could result from any kind of devastating loss. What remains after such a "shattering" are the resonances of fragility: tremulousness, and a heart laid bare.

The most prominent aspect of this work is the exploration of fields of orchestral colour and texture. From the outset, sleighbells underpin a series of expanding chord clusters which, like other chord clusters in the work, grow out of a single pitch into an orchestral colour field.

At other times, a large full chord will dissolve into a single unison note. The pointillistic, fast-moving second section marked "scintillante, leggiere" (sparkling light) with its short trills, repeated notes and short running figures, is transformed into a broader, more darkly agitated texture of repeated notes. In the next section, this repetitive element begins in the lowest strings (pizzicato), gradually incorporating other instruments as it moves upward through the orchestral palette before it finally culminates in the high register with only the flute and piccolo.

Out of a great crash in the full orchestra, large expansive chords lead into the quiet middle section which focuses on primitive and sensual flutterings and bendings in the flute over a background of string glissandi. The haunting sounds of a bowed vibraphone, water gong, bass drum and temple bowls are heard throughout this section.

AL

TONIGHT I CAN WRITE

BY PABLO NERUDA

Tonight I can write the saddest lines.

Write for example, 'The night is shattered
and the blue stars shiver in the distance.'

The night wind revolves in the sky and sings.

Tonight I can write the saddest lines.
I loved her, and sometimes she loved me too.

Through nights like this one I held her in my arms.
I kissed her again and again under the endless sky.

She loved me, sometimes I loved her too.
How could one not have loved her great still eyes.

Tonight I can write the saddest lines.
To think that I do not have her. To feel that I have lost her.

To hear immense night, still more immense without her.
And the verse falls to the soul like dew to a pasture.

What does it matter that my love could not keep her.
The night is shattered and she is not with me.

This is all. In the distance someone is singing. In the distance.
My soul is not satisfied that it has lost her.

My sight searches for her as though to go to her.
My heart looks for her, and she is not with me.

The same night whitening the same trees.
We, of that time, are no longer the same.

I no longer love her, that's certain, but how I loved her.
My voice tried to find the wind to touch her hearing.

Another's. She will be another's. Like my kisses before.
Her voice. Her bright body. Her infinite eyes.

I no longer love her, that's certain, but maybe I love her.
Love is short, forgetting is so long.

Because through nights like this one I held her in my arms
my soul is not satisfied that it has lost her.

Though this be the last pain that she makes me suffer
and these the last verses that I write for her.

TABUH-TABUHAN

(1936)

COLIN MCPHEE

Ostinatos

Nocturne

Finale

Tabuh-Tabuhan was composed in Mexico in 1936 and first performed by Carols Chavez and the National Orchestra of Mexico City. It was written after he had spent four years in Bali engaged in musical research, and is largely inspired, especially in its orchestration, by the various methods he had learned of Balinese gameian technique. The title of the work derives from the Balinese word “tabuh”, originally meaning the mallet used for striking a percussion instrument, but extended to mean strike or beat (the drum, a gong, xylophone or metallophone). *Tabuh-Tabuhan* is thus a Balinese collective noun, meaning different drum rhythms, metric forms, gong punctuations, gameians, and music essentially percussive. In a subtitle, he calls the work Toccata for Orchestra and Two Pianos.

Although *Tabuh-Tabuhan* makes much use of Balinese musical material, McPhee considers it a purely personal work in which Balinese and composed motifs, melodies, and rhythms have been fused to make a symphonic work. Balinese music never rises to an emotional climax, but at the same time has a terrific rhythmic drive and symphonic surge, and this partly influenced me in planning the form of the work. Many of the syncopated rhythms of Balinese music have a close affinity with those of Latin-American popular music and American jazz a history in itself and these have formed the basic impulse of the work from start to finish.

The transfer the intricate, chime-like polyphonic figurations of the gameian, keyed instruments, and gong-chimes, McPhee has used a “nuclear gameian” composed of two pianos, celesta, xylophone, marimba, and glockenspiel. These form the core of the orchestra. The various sounds produced by hand-beaten drums are simulated by pizzicati in the cellos and basses, low harp, and staccato piano tones. McPhee has included two Balinese gongs of special pitch, and Balinese gongs of special pitch, and Balinese cymbals, to which are added further gong tones simulated by pianos, horns, etc. Around these more exotic resonances, a comparatively normal orchestra amplifies and extends the different timbres to their maximum intensity. For the rest, the percussion element is simple, including only large cymbal, triangle, sandpaper, and bass drum.

The form of *Tabuh-Tabuhan* is more or less that of the classical symphony. There are three movements: *Ostinatos*, *Nocturne*, and *Finale*. This may not be the place to point out all the purely Balinese motifs. Suffice it to say that the flute melody in the *Nocturne* is an entirely Balinese flute tune, taken down as played. The syncopated “Finale” is based on the gay music of the xylophone orchestras which accompany popular street dances. This is heard in its authentic form at the beginning of the work and given the grand treatment at the end.

A final word about the two Balinese gongs indicated in the score. *Tabuh-Tabuhan* was composed around the actual pitch of two Balinese gongs in McPhee's possession at the time but now no longer available. Nevertheless, it was thought better to include them in the present score, since they once formed an integral part of the work, affecting tonality of the complete composition. These two gong tones, however, will be found duplicated in the score by certain instruments, e.g., pianos, horns, trombones. Thus gongs of any other pitch will not do. Should either or both gongs of the pitch indicated be available they should be used, as they contribute greatly to the special resonance of the orchestra, but musically the work is quite complete without their inclusion.

TRISTAN KEURIS

COMPOSER

TRISTAN KEURIS was one of the leading Dutch composers of his generation. He studied at the Utrecht Conservatory with Ton de Leeuw (1962-69), and taught musical theory and composition in Groningen (1974-77), Hilversum (1977-1984), Utrecht (1984-1996) and Amsterdam (1989-96). He also gave master classes in Christiansand (1984), Houston (1987) and Manchester (1988).

In 1976 Keuris gained wide public acclaim when he won the prestigious Matthijs Vermeulen Prize for his *Sinfonia for Orchestra* (1974). Even in this early work were traces of the hedonistic and Dionysian qualities that Keuris permits himself in his music from time to time – qualities which were to appear later in the breathtaking virtuosity and brilliant orchestration of the *Concerto for Saxophone Quartet and Orchestra* (1986).

In 1982, Keuris received the Cultural Award of Hilversum for his *Piano Concerto* (1980) and the *Movements for Orchestra* (1981), which were performed by Bernard Haitink and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra on their 1982 US tour. Keuris composed the expressive *Clarinet Quintet* for the centenary of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw in 1988 and, for the centenary of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in the same year, was commissioned to write *Catena for Wind Orchestra and Percussion*. Other major commissions include *Symphonic Transformations* (1987) for the Houston Symphony Orchestra, *Three Michelangelo Songs* (1990) for Jard van Nes, the *Concerto for Two Cellos* (1992), the song-cycle *Laudi* (1993) for Netherlands Radio, the orchestral *Three Preludes* (1994) for the Kondrashin Competition, and *Arcade for Orchestra* (1995) for the opening of the new studio of the Radio Philharmonic Orchestra in Hilversum, The Netherlands.

Most of Keuris' works are influenced by a mixture of expansive Romantic gestures and Stravinskian aloofness, combined with a musical language consisting of exploded fragmented melodies, dramatic harmonic shifts and tightly-knit chords, all dramatically juxtaposed with moments of stillness or harmonic inertia. Keuris' many orchestral scores reveal him to be a brilliant orchestrator, who enjoyed exploring every imaginable combination of sounds and colours, without indulging in technical superficialities.

From the late 1980s, Keuris' vocal scores such as *To Brooklyn Bridge* (1988), *Three Michelangelo Songs* (1990), *L'Infinito* (1990) and *Laudi* (1993) proved influential in the development of a richer harmonic language with broader melodic lines. In the 1990s his style evolved to a more overtly romantic expressiveness, albeit still embedded in masterly and brilliant orchestrations, as in *Three Preludes for orchestra* (1994), *Symphony in D* (1995), *Violin Concerto no.2* (1995) and *Arcade for orchestra* (1995).

1946 - 1996

JOHN REA COMPOSER

The year 2007 saw the premiere of *Singulari-T* (Tombeau de Ligeti), for chamber ensemble. While in 2006, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra presented his violin concerto, *Figures hâtives*, a commission of the MSO; in 2005, first performances of *Accident: Tombeau de Grisey* took place in Paris and Montreal; in 2004, *Lent Chagrin*, for voice and piano.

In 2003, his orchestration of *Seven Early Songs* by Gustav Mahler premiered in Montreal, commissioned and performed by the *Nouvel Ensemble Moderne*. He re-orchestrated for twenty-one players Alban Berg's operatic masterpiece, *Wozzeck* with producers in Vienna (2002), Victoria BC (2003) and Princeton N.J. (2003). Other productions of the chamber orchestra version of *Wozzeck* occurred in Orford, Québec (2004), Buenos Aires (2005), Montreal (2006), Lille, France (2007).

An original and daring composition for small orchestra and computer-driven *Disklavier* (manufactured by Yamaha) received its premiere in 2002 by the *Société de musique contemporaine du Québec* and, later, by Toronto's *Esprit Orchestra*. Drawing its inspiration from the meteorological concept known as the 'butterfly effect', John Rea's twenty-eight-minute work entitled *I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man* for short, *Man Butterfly*, journeys through a delicate but also stormy soundscape where small variations at the initial conditions of the music result in huge, dynamic transformations at the concluding events.

Among other of his creative projects over the last few years: *Schattenwerk*, for two violins (Halifax, 2003); *Sacrée Landowska*, music theater for actress/harpsichordist and eight musicians (Montreal, 2001); *Music, according to Aquinas*, for chamber choir (12 voices), two clarinets and cello (Vancouver, 2000); incidental music for the play *Urfaust : tragédie subjective* (after Goethe and Pessoa) for Théâtre UBU (Montreal/Weimar, 1999).

Recipient of many awards, John Rea has been frequently commissioned and has written works in several genres: chamber music, music-theater, electroacoustic music, and compositions for large ensemble such as orchestra, ballet, choral, and opera.

In 1979-80, he lived in Berlin, and later in 1984, was composer-in-residence at Mannheim. His compositions have been presented in such prestigious events as the New Music America Festival in Philadelphia; at *L'Itinéraire*, Festival Musica, and the "Présences" Festival in France; in Japan and in Hungary; the Festival de Liège in Belgium; at the Holland Festival; and the Festivals of the Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM) in Denmark, Canada, and Sweden.

John Rea has lectured and published articles on twentieth century music and, since 1973, has taught composition, music theory and music history at McGill University where he served as Dean of the Faculty of Music (1986-1991), today the Schulich School of Music. Rea was a founding member of the Montreal new music society, *Les Événements du Neuf* (1978-1989). Currently he sits on the editorial board for the French-language new music journal, *Circuit : musiques contemporaines*, and recently completed a long tenure on the artistic/programming committee of the Montreal concert organization, the *Société de musique contemporaine du Québec*.

John Rea 1944 - Present

ALEXINA LOUIE

COMPOSER

ALEXINA LOUIE has created memorable compositions in many major musical genres for countless numbers of Canada's most highly regarded soloists, chamber ensembles, new music ensembles and orchestras. Among her many performances during this season, pianist Jon Kimura Parker is celebrating the 20th Anniversary of his commissioning of the piano work, *Scenes From a Jade Terrace*, with a CD recording as well as a tour of Canada (Music Toronto, February 26, 2008) and the United States.

Not only has Alexina Louie written works for the concert halls, she has also written major works for theatre, including opera and ballet. She and choreographer Matt Mrowzewski created *Wolf's Court*, a major new work for The National Ballet of Canada which was premiered in June 2007 in Toronto's Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts making it the first major Canadian composition to be performed on the stage of Toronto's new opera house.

Her works have been performed by major conductors including Sir Andrew Davis, Leonard Slatkin, Alexander Lazarev, Charles Dutoit, Gunther Herbig, Pinchas Zukerman, among others.

Film and television work include, with co-writer Alex Pauk, original scores for Jeremy Podeswa's *Five Senses*, Don McKellar's *Last Night*, Don McBrearty's *Interrogation of Michael Crowe*, Larry Weinstein's *Ravel's Brain*, Kevin McMahon's *The Face of Victory*, and Moze Mossanen's *Roxana*. Louie and Pauk were awarded The Louis Applebaum Composer's Award for Film and Television Composition (2002). Most recently the writing team won the Yorkton Film Festival's Golden Sheaf Award (Best Music-Fiction) for *Roxana*. Louie won the same award in 2006 for *Burnt Toast*.

Along with her collaborators librettist Dan Redican and director Larry Weinstein, Louie created a made-for-TV domestic comic opera *Burnt Toast* (CBC DVD CBU 317036), a set of eight comedic mini-operas which won the Grand Prix at the prestigious 43rd Golden Prague Film Festival (2006) in a juried field of 147 international films. *Burnt Toast* was preceded by the ground-breaking *Toothpaste*, their successful five minute "tragic opera buffa", *Toothpaste* (www.toothpastetv.com).

As composer-in-residence of the Canadian Opera Company, Alexina Louie had her full-length opera, *The Scarlet Princess*, with libretto by Tony Award-winning playwright David Henry Hwang (*M. Butterfly*) premiered in concert by the COC in April 2002.

A multi Juno prize-winning composer, she has three times been awarded the SOCAN Jan V. Matejcek Concert Music Award for being the most frequently performed Canadian classical composer. In March 2002 the National Arts Centre named Alexina Louie as one of three recipients of the NAC Composer Awards. She has won the Leger Prize for her work *Nightfall* as well as the Chalmer's National Music Award for *Obsessions*.

Ms. Louie is a recipient of the Order of Ontario and a Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal. She received an honorary doctorate from the University of Calgary in 2002 and in 2005 was invested as an Officer of the Order of Canada. In 2005 she became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.

COLIN MCPHEE COMPOSER

COLIN CARHART MCPHEE was born in Montreal in 1900 (the year that Queen Victoria died), but he grew up in Toronto. As a young piano prodigy, he devoted his youthful energy to the pyrotechnics of Liszt. Solo recitals in Massey Hall were followed by study at the Peabody Institute in Baltimore. On a visit to his home town, he played his own piano concerto with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and a local businessman was so impressed that he sent McPhee to Paris for further studies from 1924 to 1926...

In Paris, McPhee made a notoriously characteristic decision NOT to study with Nadia Boulanger, as so many composers of his generation had. He opted instead for New York, and the more avant-garde composer Edgard Varese. In New York, he met the woman who would soon become his wife, Jane Belo. She was a budding anthropologist (a graduate student of Margaret Mead), and on the rebound from her first marriage to a very rich man. One night at an exotic dinner party on Manhattan's East Side, Colin and Jane heard the siren song of Balinese gamelan music, scratchily captured on primitive early cylinder recordings from Bali. Within a matter of months, they were married and steaming across the Indian Ocean to the island of their dreams.

Bali was just as far away from Western culture as one could go, back in 1931. It became, for McPhee, what Samoa was for Robert Louis Stevenson or what Tahiti was for Paul Gauguin. East meets West with fascinating results.

Colin and Jane used Belo's alimony income to build a comfortable "house" (actually a multi-building Balinese compound) high up in the palm-shrouded hills that surround the island's sacred central volcano. They used McPhee's cross-cultural imagination to enter the unbelievably rich creative tradition of Balinese society. They went native.

Throughout the 1930s, Colin McPhee immersed himself in an intensive investigation of Balinese gamelan music. McPhee watched while craftsmen forged the metal gongs and brass bells that ultimately combine with wooden xylophones, skin drums and bamboo flutes to make up a gamelan ensemble. He criss-crossed the island in search of arcane local variants of both instrumentation and tunes. He painstakingly notated the melodic and percussive complexities of every gamelan piece he heard played. Their titles were as exotic as their sounds: "Crow Stealing Eggs"; "Cow Drinks"; "Toad Climbs Paw-Paw"; or "Burning Grass." In many ways, McPhee quite literally and quite personally saved the Balinese gamelan tradition. During the time that he lived there, he happily commissioned the formation or reconstitution of gamelan ensembles that were already dead or dying. He wrote a musicological masterpiece called *Music in Bali* which is still the standard textbook at the prestigious Conservatory of Music and Dance, in Bali's capital city, Den Pasar. McPhee's name remains a household word in Bali. His musical achievements are only now beginning to be acknowledged by the rest of the world.

Tabuh-tabuhan will always be McPhee's signature piece. In the midst of its composition, in the middle of 1936, Colin wrote to Henry Cowell announcing the imminent arrival of a "concerto for two pianos and large orchestra using Bali, Jazz and McPhee elements." It would be difficult to come up with any more accurate explanation of the musical forces deployed. Melodies and rhythms have been borrowed from Bali. Jazz links are everywhere. And the ultimate result is quintessential, classical Colin McPhee. It received a standing ovation at the Mexico City premiere under Chávez in 1936. It languished without another performance, however, for more than a decade, despite McPhee's best efforts to bring it to the attention of a number of prominent conductors. In a 1949 letter to Aaron Copland, after the first North American radio broadcast performance of *Tabuh-tabuhan*, McPhee confided that "I simply can't believe I wrote it."

By then, McPhee was in the middle of a desperate drinking depression. He had never really recovered from the painful separation of actually leaving Bali - which had coincided with the end of his marriage to Jane Belo. Theirs had been a rather bizarre relationship from the very beginning. He was openly gay. She was clearly bisexual. Bali had allowed them to go their own ways. For a short while in the 1940s, McPhee lived in a cooperative brownstone in Brooklyn, New York, where his roommates included W.H. Auden, Carson McCullers, Benjamin Britten, Peter Pears, Truman Capote, Paul Bowles, Jane Bowles, Leonard Bernstein and Gypsy Rose Lee! McPhee and Britten and Bowles and Bernstein apparently fought for periodic possession of the grand piano. One could only have wished to be a fly upon the wall!

In the late 1950s, almost as a dying breath, McPhee composed the other works on this recording. Transitions to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra toward the end of his life, McPhee was offered a job teaching music at the University of California in Los Angeles. He moved there and was on the home stretch of completing (his book) *Music in Bali* when his drinking and poor health caught up with him... He was often suicidal and shortly before he died, wrote wistfully to a friend. "I've come to discover a beautiful mystery in life. My few friends admire or love me not for my accomplishments, but for what I might have done." - excerpted from an article (Canada's world music pioneer) written by Ulla Colgrass for *The Globe and Mail*, Saturday, March 22, 1977.



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The *Creative Sparks* Mentoring and Creative Leadership Programme is a community-based pilot project involving the composition and performance of new music by public and high school students. The programme will feature activities and concerts taking place in venues throughout the Greater Toronto Area. The plan involves composers of various ages and stylistic leanings, working with students throughout the season to create new works which will be performed by students combined with Esprit players during the 2008 *New Wave Festival*. The project will also involve an array of international guest composers related to the 2008 *New Wave Festival*. This programme will involve young people of all levels of musical accomplishment and will reach many layers in the community from areas with many resources available, to those where increased cultural and social investment is needed.

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As part of *Creative Sparks*, Esprit welcomes the participation of the Nathaniel Dett Chorale under the direction of Brainerd Blyden-Taylor

Special support for this project has been made available by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Arts Education Partnership Initiative of the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture (administered by the Ontario Arts Foundation) and The Canada Council Supplementary Operating Funds Initiative. The project provides “matching funds” opportunities.



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